

The recent storms resulted in a large number of **downed tree branches** and limbs. Regular **weekly yard waste pick-ups have resumed every Monday**, so put branches and smaller limbs (bundled into 4' lengths) out for pick up. If you have larger limbs, put them near the curb and the Town maintenance staff will pick them up for chipping. That activity has begun and will continue intermittently as maintenance personnel have time.

If you own a **historic home** in Montgomery County, you are eligible for local tax credits for snowstorm-related repairs. To qualify, the cost of the repair work must exceed \$1,000. The tax credit, applied toward county property taxes, will equal 10 percent of expenses. To learn more, or to download an application form, visit:

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic/instructions/taxcredit.shtm> or call **301-563-3400**.

Firewood: The Town winter tree removal program got sidelined by the snows, but will resume. For those removals that are good firewood (oak, maple), logs will be cut in fireplace length and stacked at the side of the road. We do not know in advance which trees will be cut or specific days (giving this flexibility to the removal contractor contributes to lower cost for the Town), but we will endeavor to put up notices at Penn Place with locations of recent removals as they occur. Firewood is reserved for Town residents.

The Town is evaluating the **Garrett Park web site** <http://www.garrettpark-md.gov/> for potential changes, particularly to enhance appearance and utility. Let us know your comments about content, format, appearance, etc.

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Of interest, regarding **storm damage to trees and shrubs**, from a commercial website:

What to Expect

- Unfortunately, plants cannot stand up to heavy snow drifts or mountains of snow piled on top of them. Any type of plant, evergreen or deciduous (loses its leaves), has the potential to be crushed.
- Plants planted near streets, driveways and walks may have been sprayed with salt or ice melting chemicals, which may kill branches or root systems.
- Many large shrubs and trees have broken branches, have the tops broken or have cracks and splits. Some of the damage might not become apparent until later this spring as new growth develops.
- Evergreen plants may have the leaves or needles stripped from the top of the branches. This was probably caused by animals (not just deer) eating the leaves to survive while their normal food sources were unavailable.
- Large trees and shrubs are falling over due to the saturated soil.
- Some damage will not show up until spring. The soil is becoming more and more saturated as the snow melts. The excessive wetness may rot root systems, resulting in plant decline or death. This may be the situation for perennial plants as well, especially grasses.

What You Can Do

- Allow the snow to melt gradually. Do not attempt to shovel out plants.
- Survey your property looking carefully for potentially hazardous situations, such as leaning trees and cracked limbs.
- Prune broken branches. Do not use pruning sealants. As branches break and fall they can tear into the trunk. Unfortunately that tear can be an avenue for insects and decay and it may require professional care.

- Deciduous shrubs, such as barberry, nandina, hydrangeas and spirea, can be cut back to the ground if they have been crushed by the snow. This is an extreme measure that should only be used in circumstances like the ones we have right now. Since the root system should be fine, the plant will probably come back. Depending on its age and size, however, it may take several years to recover to its original size.
- Evergreens that have been crushed may not recover as easily. You can attempt to tie up branches of boxwood, junipers, yews and other shrubs. Chain lock rope (a plastic interlocking rope, sold at the nursery) can be used to support the branches. Here again, it may take years for the branches to correct themselves. Because the branches are tied together, there may be an increased chance of fungal diseases.